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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I have filed some amendments because I believe that there needs to be some discussion. But I thought we could start off with one that will at least, I hope, generate some discussion relating to the quantity of casinos across Nebraska. This strikes the number eight, inserts the number one. And so I think that we can narrow the issue here for debate, hopefully, with this amendment, and see what the will of the body is. I've been studying the issue relating to gambling as much as possible. And I guess the most obvious thing is, we do have gambling in Nebraska already with tracks, with pickle cards. But it's basically the policy that we don't have the more addictive forms of gambling, such as slot machines and tables. And I want to be a realist here, and I think, hopefully, generate some discussion, because I believe that this is an important step that our state is taking, and certainly will have some effects if we choose to do that. And I've heard comments here on the floor that, I'm opposed to gambling but I want the people to vote. I understand that. I've heard from constituents, actually, who used to live in Iowa, who have moved to my district and said--and they're not predisposed politically. I wouldn't say they're ultraconservative or ultraliberal. They seem to be pretty fair-minded folks, who say, we can do better than bringing in casinos. And so I want to offer up FA1469, once again, that strikes the number eight casinos and puts in one casino. And so we can take that up. I do have some other amendments that I am anxious to discuss, because it discusses and relates to the local impact that casinos would have across Nebraska. It would allow counties to vote whether or not they would have a casino. And it's my desire that counties could take a preemptive stand, perhaps, before they would have this onslaught of casino interests lobbying the county board or lobbying the constituencies of a county about how good it is for them, and would prevent folks from Las Vegas saying, we're here from Vegas and we're here to help, because I certainly am in questioning of that type of situation. But again, FA1469 is very simple. Instead of eight casinos it would be one. And I urge its adoption. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: You've heard the opening on FA1469, by